Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0015] beginning at page 4, with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0015] Fig. 1 shows a high capacity processing system 10 for processing a food product, and includes first and second loading stations 12 and 14, each of which is like that shown in incorporated U.S. Patent 6,086,469, including a sausage making machine provided by a stuffer/linker 16, 18, respectively, each producing an elongated strand of food product in a casing having tubular segments serially joined by pinched connection segments, for example as shown in Fig. 1 of incorporated U.S. Patent 6,523,462, and Fig. 11 of incorporated U.S. Patent 6,086,469. First and second strand loading ~~exits~~ stations 12 and 14 are adjacent respective first and second discharge exits 20 and 22 of respective first and second strand producing machines 16 and 18. The loading stations may be monitored by operators such as shown at 24, 26. A conveyor 28 provided by the chain shown in the noted incorporated '462 and '469 patents traverses around first and second sprockets 30 and 32 at respective first and second strand loading stations 12 and 14. A plurality of J-shaped hooks, schematically shown at 34 in Fig. 1 and shown in Figs. 2-7 herein, and shown in the noted incorporated '462 and '469 patents, are mounted to chain 28 for receiving the strand of food product at a respective stranding loading station, all as set forth in the incorporated '462 and '469 patents. The chain traverses serially through the first and second strand loading stations ~~30~~12 and ~~32~~14.

Please replace paragraph [0017], beginning at page 5, with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0017] First accumulator 38 has a first set of fixed sprockets 48, and a ~~second~~ first set of moveable sprockets 50 moveable toward and away from the first set of

fixed sprockets 48. In the orientation of Fig. 1, moveable sprockets 50 are moveable left and right, toward and away, respectively, from fixed sprockets 48. For further reference, attention is directed to chain take-up assembly 20 in Figs. 1-3 of the incorporated '469 patent. Second accumulator 40 includes a second set of fixed sprockets 52, and a second set of moveable sprockets 54 moveable toward and away from the second set of fixed sprockets 52. In the orientation of Fig. 1, moveable sprockets 54 move rightwardly toward fixed sprockets 52, and leftwardly away from fixed sprockets 52. Third accumulator 44 includes a third set of fixed sprockets 56, and a third set of moveable sprockets 58 moveable toward and away from the third set of fixed sprockets 56. In the orientation of Fig. 1, moveable sprockets 58 move leftwardly toward fixed sprockets 56, and move rightwardly away from fixed sprockets 56. Fourth accumulator 46 includes a fourth set of fixed sprockets 60, and a fourth set of moveable sprockets 62 moveable toward and away from the fourth set of fixed sprockets 60. In the orientation of Fig. 1, moveable sprockets 62 move rightwardly toward fixed sprockets 60, and move leftwardly away from fixed sprockets 60. The first and second sets of moveable sprockets 50 and 54 are linked by a common rigid subframe member 64, as in the incorporated '469 patent, and move in unison such that the first set of moveable sprockets 50 move rightwardly away from the first set of fixed sprockets 48 when the second set of moveable sprockets 54 move rightwardly toward the second set of fixed sprockets 52. Likewise, the first set of moveable sprockets 50 move leftwardly toward the first set of fixed sprockets 48 when the second set of moveable sprockets 54 move leftwardly away from the second set of fixed sprockets 52. The third and fourth sets of moveable sprockets 58 and 62 are linked by a common rigid subframe member 66 and move in unison such that the third set of moveable sprockets 58 move rightwardly away from the third set of fixed sprockets 56 when the fourth set of moveable sprockets 62 move rightwardly toward the fourth set of fixed sprockets 60, and likewise the third set of moveable sprockets 58 move leftwardly toward the third set of fixed sprockets 56 when the fourth set of moveable sprockets 62 move leftwardly away from the fourth set of fixed sprockets 60.

Please replace paragraph [0022], beginning at page 9, with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0022] As noted above, conveyor chain 28 traverses serially through first and second loading stations 12 and 14. In one loading-down-time accumulation mode, accumulator 38 takes-up the conveyor, and accumulator 40 pays-out the conveyor, and conveyor movement is stopped at first loading station 12 and at outlet 90 of accumulator 38 and at inlet 92 of accumulator 40. In another loading-down-time accumulation mode, accumulator 44 takes-up the conveyor, and accumulator ~~48~~46 pays-out the conveyor, and conveyor movement is stopped at at least second loading station 14 and at outlet 94 of accumulator 40 and at inlet 96 of accumulator 46. In a further loading-down-time accumulation mode, accumulator 44 takes-up the conveyor, accumulator 46 pays-out the conveyor, and conveyor movement is stopped at loading station 14 and at outlet 94 of accumulator 40 and at inlet 96 of accumulator 46 and at loading station 12 and at outlet 90 of accumulator 38 and at inlet 92 of accumulator 40. The noted first through fourth accumulators, including the noted second accumulator 40 in series between first and second loading stations 12 and 14, enable first and second conveyor velocities through each of the first and second loading stations, the first conveyor velocity providing the noted loading velocity during which food product is loaded on the conveyor, the second conveyor velocity providing the noted bypass velocity during which food product is not loaded on the conveyor. System 10 has the noted first mode wherein food product is loaded on the conveyor at first loading station 12 while the conveyor is moving at the noted loading velocity to provide the noted first segment of the conveyor loaded with food product, and when the first segment reaches second loading station 14 the conveyor is advanced through second loading station 14 at the noted higher bypass velocity without food product loading by second loading station 14. System 10 has the noted second mode wherein the conveyor is advanced through first loading station 12 at the noted bypass velocity without food

product loading by first loading station 12, to provide a second empty segment of conveyor unloaded with food product and in series with the noted first segment, and when the second segment reaches second loading station 14 the conveyor is advanced through second loading station 14 at the noted loading velocity with food product loading by second loading station 14. The conveyor as it leaves first loading station 12 has a plurality of intermittent segments comprising the first set of segments comprising the noted first segments loaded with food product, and the noted second set of empty segments comprising the second segments unloaded with food product. The second segments are spaced by respective first segments therebetween. The conveyor as it leaves second loading station 14 has the noted second segments loaded with food product, in addition to the noted first segments loaded with food product. System 10 has a third mode wherein conveyor movement at first loading station 12 is stopped, while conveyor movement continues to inlet 70 of processing station 68 and from outlet 74 of processing station 68. System 10 has a fourth mode wherein conveyor movement at second loading station 14 is stopped, while conveyor movement continues to inlet 70 of processing station 68 and from outlet 74 of processing station 68. Conveyor 28 has the noted transport velocity at outlet 72 of accumulator 46 and at inlet 70 of processing station 68 and at outlet 74 of processing station 68 and at inlet 76 of accumulator 44. The transport velocity remains constant and the same during each of the noted four modes of system 10. The transport velocity remains constant and the same during both of the noted loading and bypass velocities of the conveyor at the loading stations 12, 14, and also remains constant and the same during the noted stopped movement of the conveyor at the loading stations 12, 14. As above noted, the transport velocity is less than the bypass velocity and greater than the loading velocity. The loading/bypass/accumulation section is subject to the demands of the conveyor in the thermal processing station 68, which can override the loading/bypass/accumulation in order to maintain constant and uniform conveyor speed through thermal processing station 68. First and second loading stations 12 and 14 can simultaneously load food product on a single conveyor 28.